

Fall 2023
GOVT 2306-002: Texas Government
Department of Social Sciences
South Plains College

Instructor: Dr. Timothy Holland
Course Time: Mondays and Wednesdays at 11:00AM
Course Number: GOVT 2306-006 (Texas Government)
Location: AD 140
Professor's Office: AD 134
Email: tholland@southplainscollege.edu
Office Phone: (806) 716-2972

Course Description: This course is a survey of fundamental principles of political science, including the American system of government and the origins and development of the constitutions of the United States. This course satisfies the Legislative requirement for teacher certification.

Credit: 3 lecture hours

Prerequisites: TSI compliance in reading

Course Purpose: Government 2306, as taught at South Plains College, is a reading intensive course designed to acquaint the learner with the origin and development of the Texas Constitution, structure and powers of state and local government, federalism and intergovernmental relations, political participation, the electoral process, public policy, and the political structure of Texas. This course meets the statutory requirements as set forth by the State of Texas.

Approval Number: 45.1002.5125

Course Requirements: To maximize a student's potential to complete this course, he/she should attend all class meetings, complete all homework assignments and examinations in a timely manner, and complete all other projects or papers as assigned in the instructor's specific instructions.

Course Calendar

Week	Day	Date	Lecture Topic
Week 1	Monday	28-Sep	Syllabus and First Class Activity
	Wednesday	30-Sep	Introduction to Texas Politics
Week 2	Monday	4-Sep	No Class - Labor Day
	Wednesday	6-Sep	Federalism and the States
Week 3	Monday	11-Sep	Federalism and the States
	Wednesday	13-Sep	Texas Constitution
Week 4	Monday	18-Sep	Texas Constitution
	Wednesday	20-Sep	Texas Constitution

Week 5	Monday	25-Sep	Exam 1
	Wednesday	27-Sep	Public Opinion
Week 6	Monday	2-Oct	Interest Groups
	Wednesday	4-Oct	Political Parties
Week 7	Monday	9-Oct	Political Parties
	Wednesday	11-Oct	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
Week 8	Monday	16-Oct	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
	Wednesday	18-Oct	Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
Week 9	Monday	23-Oct	Exam 2
	Wednesday	25-Oct	Legislature
Week 10	Monday	30-Oct	Legislature
	Wednesday	1-Nov	Legislature
Week 11	Monday	6-Nov	Plural Executive
	Wednesday	8-Nov	Plural Executive
Week 12	Monday	13-Nov	Exam 3
	Wednesday	15-Nov	Judiciary
Week 13	Monday	20-Nov	Judiciary
	Wednesday	22-Nov	No Class - Thanksgiving Break
Week 14	Monday	27-Nov	Local Government
	Wednesday	29-Nov	Local Government
Week 15	Monday	4-Dec	Public Policy
	Wednesday	6-Dec	Public Policy
Final Exam: Monday, December 11 at 10:15AM			

*You should consider this calendar a rough guide for when we will discuss a particular topic and more importantly when we will take an exam. However, the final exam will take place on the day and time listed.

Office Hours: Please attend my regularly scheduled office hours listed below if you have any questions or concerns. My office is located in the Administration Building, room 134. If you cannot attend my office hours you may email me to set up an alternative time or we can discuss your question or concern via email.

Office Hours	AD134
Monday	By appointment only
Tuesday	9:45AM to 10:45AM
Wednesday	1:00PM to 3:00PM
Thursday	9:45AM to 10:45PM & 1:00PM to 3:00PM
Friday	10:00AM to 12:00PM
Email	tholland@southplainscollege.edu

Grading Scale:

Grade	Percent
A	90% or greater
B	80% to 89.99%
C	70% to 79.99%
D	60% to 69.99%
F	Less than 60%

Grade Distribution:

Graded Items	Percentage of Grade
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	20%
Exam 4	20%
Attendance and Participation	20%
TOTAL	100%

Exams: There will be four exams in this course. Each exam will be worth 20% of your total grade. Each exam will be composed primarily of multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank questions, but there will likely be true/false questions. You will be informed before the exam if short answer or essay questions are used in the exam. If a short answer or essay question is used it will compose no more than 50 percent of the exams grade.

Attendance Policy: You are required to regularly attend class and I will take roll at the beginning of each class. Attendance will account for 20 percent of your total grade. Your attendance grade will be calculated by dividing the number of days you have attended by the number of class days held throughout the semester. If you are sick or attending an SPC-sponsored event please email me so that I can mark you as excused. This is important so that I am know you are not simply skipping class and your grade is not penalized.

Illness Policy: Please do not come to class if you are sick. Regardless of whether it's a cold, or COVID-19, or any other common illness, I would prefer you did not come to class so that you do not spread your illness to other students or myself.

COVID-19 Statement:

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not attend class and either seek medical attention or test for COVID-19.

- Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscles or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste and smell

If you are positive for COVID-19 please notify DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at dedens@southplainscollege.edu or 806-716-2376. You should isolate for 5 days after which you may return to class if your symptoms are improving and you do not have a fever without the assistance of fever-reducing medications.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated in this course. South Plains College provides for a wide range of punishments for cheating including failing the assignment, quiz, exam, or course. I will be vigilant against cheating and you will at a minimum fail the assignment, quiz, or exam in which cheating or plagiarism has occurred. Repeated instances of plagiarism or cheating will result in failure of the course and possibly disciplinary action by the College.

A.I. Technology: A.I. technology is prohibited in this course. Any use of A.I. technology to complete or supplement written work is cheating. I will drop you with a failing grade if you use any A.I. technology in this course.

Extra Credit: I do not intend to provide any extra credit opportunities in this course. If I provide extra credit it will be announced to the entire class so do not ask me for extra credit.

Final Grades: Do not ask me to round up your grade. Any grade that is XX.5 or higher will be rounded up to the next whole number. Therefore, if you have an 85.5 your grade will be rounded up to an 86. However, if your grade was 85.4, then your grade would remain an 85.

Gradebook: You will be able to view your graded assignments, quizzes, and exams in the “My Grades” link.

Classroom Discussions: Although this class is primarily lecture-based, you will be encouraged to contribute to classroom discussions on the topic of the day or other relevant political topics which may arise. Given the nature of this course students may express political views contrary to your own and while no one is required to agree with another’s political views you are required to be respectful. I encourage you to honestly express your views in this class but you must be respectful in both your tone and delivery.

Syllabus Statements: For Information regarding Intellectual Exchange, Disabilities, Non-Discrimination, Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations, CARE (Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation) Team, and Campus Concealed Carry, please use the following link:

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

SPC Policy Regarding “Standard English”: All written assignments should be presented using the conventions of Standard Written English. South Plains College requires all students to become proficient in “academic English,” a form of English that is typically used in academic, professional, and business contexts. While slang, regional idioms, and formal kinds of self-expression are appropriate in some contexts, they are out of place in academic writing. Writing instructors and professors in courses across the campus expect all students to demonstrate

proficiency in using the conventions of academic English in their written work, whether it is in-class exams or take-home essays.

Electronic Devices: use of electronic devices for academic purposes is welcome in this class. You may use your laptop or tablet to take notes during class. Abuse of electronic devices for non-academic purposes will result in the banning of electronic devices. Do not use your phone during class. No video or audio recording devices may be used without the consent of the instructor or unless part of a disability accommodation.

Classroom Expectations: The following activities are prohibited in class. This list is not meant to be exhaustive of all prohibited behaviors.

1. Texting, emailing or other correspondence
2. Social media activity or other web browsing
3. Answering or initiating phone calls
4. Watching movies or other videos
5. Smoking, vaping, or chewing tobacco or other illicit substances

Emails: Every email must include your name, course and section number so that I can promptly address your question or concern. I will respond to your email within 24 hours. However, I will not respond to emails sent on Saturday or Sunday until the following Monday. Emails sent after normal business hours will not receive a response until the following workday. If Monday, or any other day is a public holiday for which SPC is closed, then I will not respond to the email until the following workday.

Course Evaluations: See the instructor's course information sheet for specific items used in evaluating student performance.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas Constitution
2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas
6. Analyze state and local election processes
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
8. Analyze issues, policies, and the political culture of Texas

Fundamental Component Areas (FCA):

Students will be expected to perform satisfactorily in four FCAs

1. Critical Thinking Skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information by:

- a. Generating and communicating ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information
 - b. Gathering and assessing information relevant to a question
 - c. Analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information.
2. Communication – to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, or visual communication.
 - a. Developing, interpreting, and expressing ideas through written, oral, or visual communication
3. Social Responsibility Skills – to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities by:
 - a. Demonstrating intercultural competence
 - b. Identifying civic responsibility
 - c. Engaging in regional, national, and global communities
4. Personal Responsibility – to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making by:
 - a. Reading, understanding, and affirming agreement and acceptance of principles, guidelines, and requirement set forth in the “statement of personal responsibility of students” (attached)
 - b. Evaluating choices and actions and relating consequences to personal decision-making
 - c. Accepting personal responsibility for decisions and actions taken or not taken

Syllabus Agreement: By continuing to complete the course you agree to the terms of this Syllabus. If you do not agree to the terms of the Syllabus you must drop the course.

Special Note: The professor reserves the right to change the terms of the syllabus as circumstances require. Any changes to the syllabus will be posted in Blackboard and announced in class (if the course is face-to-face).